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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Wallin

RM - 9196

My purpose for writing is to address an important and controversial issue that is the subject of much heated discussion within the Amateur Radio community; that is, the high-speed Morse Code waiver available to those with physical or learning disabilities who have passed the five words per minute requirement.

In my opinion this waiver should not be changed. I am proof that this program is effective. Because of a moderately, severe high-frequency hearing loss (a physical disability), and dyslexia (a learning disability), my ability to receive the code at higher speeds is quite compromised! My hearing loss, which is not correctable with hearing aids, makes it very difficult to discriminate the individual components of the code, while my dyslexia causes me to reverse the dits and dahs at higher speeds. This does not happen at the slower speeds, at which I can receive at nearly 100%.

It is very important that you understand my feelings about the ARRL. They DO NOT represent the average individual ham any more than today's politician represents the average American. Only about 12% of Amateur Radio operators are ARRL members, and it is totally pretentious for this group of self-appointed elitists to claim that they know what is in my best interest, or in anyone's best interest, for that matter. As an independent, free-thinking adult, I resent the assumption that any group consisting of 12% of my peers can speak for me. Amateur Radio belongs to every ham not just ARRL members.

Let me say that I passed my theory to the tune of 98%, of which I am proud. It is absurd, but those in disagreement with the high-speed waiver would, without exception, deny me access to the higher license classes even though I have documented physical and learning

disabilities, that preclude me from fulfilling an arbitrary and artificial standard that has little to do with an understanding of radio or an ability and desire to abide by FCC rules.

I'm not sure that these people understand the ramifications of the Americans with Disabilities Act. I am not an attorney, but you don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand that the elimination of a waiver for those with certain disabilities would be a piece of cake in a court of law, particularly in today's climate as regards discrimination. The ACLU would eat this up.

Statistics show that 8% have used the high-speed waiver. Critics say this number is too high. Again, I don't agree. Look at it the other way around 92 of 100,

or better than 9 out of 10 didn't need this option. 92% will get you an "A" in just about any university in America. In the last 30 years, noise pollution has gotten so bad in our society, and the diagnosis of learning disabilities has gotten so sophisticated. It's a wonder that more of us aren't deaf or learning disabled.

In closing, as a true indicator of the agenda of some of these folks, I would observe that many of them stated that they would rather see Amateur Radio

burned up rather than change their stance on the Morse requirement. I enjoy what Morse code is, but it is just another mode, nothing more, nothing less.

It is not the be all, end all of Ham Radio.

I want to thank you for your time. I realize that if it weren't for the FCC, I would not be able to enjoy the hobby that means so much to me. Thank you.

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